

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium, comprising:

a step of forming a cobalt-containing magnetic layer directly or with an intervention of an underlayer on a substrate,

a first step of heating said magnetic layer,

a step of forming a protective layer on said magnetic layer, and

a second step of heating the thus formed layers under atmospheric pressure after the formation of said protective layer, wherein

said second step of heating is carried out with a heating temperature no higher than 250°C in order to increase coercivity and reduce stacking fault density of the magnetic recording medium.

10. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to Claim 9, further comprising:

a step of forming a non-magnetic layer with hexagonal closed-packed (hcp) structure before the formation of said magnetic layer.

11. (Canceled).

12. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a perpendicular magnetic recording medium according to Claim 9, wherein said step of forming a protective layer on said magnetic layer comprises forming said protective layer of a carbonaceous material.